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RECORD OF NEGRO FOLK-LORE

ANANCY STORIES FROM JAMAICA. — Since reviewing W. Jekyll's "Jamaican Song and Story" (this *Journal*, vol. xxi, pp. 265-267), the writer has come across an interesting little book, "A Selection of Anancy Stories" (77 pp.), by "Wona," published at Kingston, Jamaica, in 1899. The collection contains the following tales: Do-mek-a-see; Put you down a me wife pot; Tocooma a me fadder ole ridin' harse; Anancy and bredda firefly; Anancy and the sheep; Anancy and bredda tiger; Dry head; Tumbletud; Anancy's deserts; Groun' hab yie; Anancy and bredda dog; Anancy meets bredda death. Most of the stories occur in both books; and there is considerable difference, sometimes, in the two versions; as for example, in the tale of Anancy and Brother Death. The "fire-fly" of the Wona stories is the "candle-fly" of the Jekyll tales. The familiar end-line of the latter, "Jack Montora me no choose any," appears in the former as "Jack Mondory I don't choose none;" Tacoma, the son of Anancy, as Tocooma. In the Wona stories, Anancy's wife is Crooky. The story of "Tocooma a me fadder ole ridin' harse" is familiar to readers of "Uncle Remus." In the Wona tale, "Anancy married Miss Rose, and lived happily for some time after." A bug-a-boo appearing in the Wona stories is "Old Hige," and we are told that "in the old slavery days it was the custom for the Nana, or nurse, to tell the breathless little 'buckra pickney-dem' these stories at night before chalking the door to keep away the dreadful 'Old Hige'" (p. 5). The author reports that "there has grown up among the Negroes themselves a strange, almost inexplicable feeling, somewhat akin to shame, which prevents their relating these stories even in the privacy of their own huts, as they once did."

NEGRO AND INDIAN. — In his article on "The Negroes and the Creek Nation," in the "Southern Workman" (vol. xxxvii, pp. 106-110), for February, 1908, Dr. F. G. Speck calls attention to the remarkable ethnological phenomenon presented by the race-amalgam of the Creek Indians and African Negroes (originally slaves). The following statement is of great interest to the folklorist: "Not only in matters of blood kinship, war and industry was the amalgamation of the two strains producing results, but the mental attitude of the Indians was being changed by intimacy with the Negroes. While the latter had almost completely lost their old African culture under the stress of existence in bondage, there was, nevertheless, a certain underlying and unchanging stratum of thought and action which stood by them throughout. And these qualities were by daily contact producing a change in the life of the Creeks which went hand in hand with their change of blood." To-day, "almost without exception, the Negroes who have been slaves to the Creeks, and who may not have Indian blood in their veins, speak Creek as fluently as they do English; many of them, indeed, speak English poorly, and with an Indian accent and idiom, — this is naturally true of those of mixed Indian and Negro blood." Perhaps the Negroes have influenced somewhat the Creek language. In mythology and folk-lore, in all probability, Negro influence is discernible. On the other hand, "the Negroes and mixed-bloods have adapted themselves readily to the Creek harvest ceremony in the absence of other religious activities, and many so-called pagan Creeks, who follow the old beliefs, are of very dark skin and present physically more Negro

than Indian features." Again, "in the ordinary customs of daily life and practice (especially superstitions) the Negroes and mixed-bloods of the nation show the characteristics of the Creeks." Dr. Speck notes that "the Negroes have had the effect of minimizing the credulity and the seriousness with which the Creeks regarded their native beliefs." The nation at present consists of four classes: (1) Old full-blood conservative Indians with nearly all of their native attributes; (2) the mixed Indian-Negroes, conservative and Indianized; (3) the modernized progressive Indians and mixed-bloods; (4) the old Negro freedmen, who hold themselves intact from both modern influences and Indian influences. Of these the second class is the most numerous and may become dominant. Dr. Speck sees a future in store for this race-mixture so remarkable in several respects.

VOODOO. — In the "Metropolitan Magazine" (N. Y.) for August, 1908 (vol. xxviii, pp. 529-538), Marvin Dana has an illustrated article on "Voodoo, its Effects on the Negro Race," based on Larousse, Miss Owen, the "Saturday Review," Sir Spenser St. John, etc., and the author's own observations. The voodoo practitioners in North America, according to Mr. Dana, "are scattered all over the land, in the North as well as in the South, from New York to Florida;" and "there is an annual gathering of the elect in Louisiana, which is held on St. John's Eve, June 23, at a lonely spot, somewhere in the neighborhood of Lake Pontchartrain, but the exact location is kept secret." The voodoo sorcerers of the United States have "a language of their own, — a mixture of African words with French." In Louisiana, this secret jargon is known as "gumbo," not to be confounded with the common speech thus named. The author styles voodoo "an African fetish worship of the basest sort," more vicious in America even than in the land of its origin. Voodoo reached the United States from Haiti, whither "the *vōdu* cult, with its adoration of the snake god, was carried by slaves from Ardra and Whydah, where the faith still remains to-day."

SPIRIT OF NEGRO POETRY. — In the "Southern Workman" (vol. xxxvii, 1908, pp. 73-77), Mr. Monroe N. Work writes of "The Spirit of Negro Poetry" before and after the war. Slave-songs were universal and personal; they were religious, and emphasized the future life; they expressed an unquestioning faith in God, and in the strength of the Negro, his ability to endure, etc. The present-day poetry of the Negro is individualistic and impersonal; objective; the religious element is not so emphasized, and there are now strains of uncertainty and doubt. The author thinks that "the deep inner life of the Negroes may be a fruitful theme" again, as in slavery days. In connection with this article should be read Dr. Proctor's discussion of "The Theology of the Songs of the Southern Slave," in the same periodical for November and December, 1907.

SEA ISLAND NEGROES. — The story "I sho ben lub dat buckra," published by J. E. Blanton, in the "Southern Workman" (vol. xxxvii, 1908, pp. 242-246), is stated to be "a very interesting and valuable bit of folk-lore, representing as it does the dialect and mode of expression of the Sea-Islanders of South Carolina."

BRAZILIAN NEGROES. — In "Anthropos" (vol. iii, 1908, pp. 881-904) E. Ignace discusses "Le fétichisme des nègres du Brésil." The article is based on the author's personal observations, with additions from Nina Rodriguez's "L'animisme fétichiste des nègres de Bahia" (Bahia, 1900), and

J. do Rio's "As Religiões no Rio" (Rio, 1904). It treats of fetishism of the Brazilian negroes; theology (*Olorun* supreme being; 16 *orisas* or saints), fetishes (*orisas* are fixed in objects by the priest; totemism only secondarily important; phylolatriy little developed; 3 classes of "magic" objects), anthropology, angelology, cosmology, eschatology, morality, hierarchy (priests, fortune-tellers, sorcerers), fetishistic liturgy (oratories, musical instruments), calendar (days of week consecrated to various *orisas*; each saint has an annual festival), ceremonies (numerous dances, sacrifices, "saint-making"), sorcery, oracles; contact of fetishism and Christianity. On p. 885 is given a list of the 16 *orisas* or saints, their colors, fetishes, sacred foods, and the figures in Christianity (Nosso Senhor de Bomfim, the Devil, Sainte Barbe à Bahia, St. Georges à Rio, St. Antoine à Bahia, the Holy Sacrament, St. Georges à Bahia). These studies of the religion of Brazilian negroes are of great psychological and ethnological value.

A. F. C.